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Lectotype designation for *Cinnyris proteus* Rüppell, 1840 (Nectariniidae)

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In 1845, Eduard Rüppell (1845: 26) described the same sunbird taxon he had already described earlier. Rüppell (1840: 91, main text and footnote; for publication date see Sawyer 1952) had proposed a new species name *Cinnyris proteus* for what is today the south-east Sudanese, Ethiopian, Eritrean and northern Kenyan form of the Scarlet-chested Sunbird *Chalcomitra senegalensis* (Steinheimer 2005a). In the protologue, nevertheless, Rüppell (1840: 91) based the name both on an illustration in Levaillant’s (1813) *Histoire naturelle des oiseaux d’Afrique* and on specimens of his own which, believing them to be similar, he described as well (first footnote, p. 91). Since all birds in Levaillant’s work lack scientific binomials, any author giving a Latin binomial by direct reference to any of Levaillant’s birds acted as the original describer—see Arts. 12.2.1 and 12.2.7 of the *International code of zoological nomenclature* (ICZN 1999). Both Levaillant’s illustration (or specifically the specimen on which it was based [(ICZN 1999: Art. 74.4)] and Rüppell’s own material cited in the protologue of *proteus* (Rüppell 1840) are thus syntypic for that name.

Subsequently, it was found that Levaillant’s figure was of a different subspecies from Rüppell’s specimens, and that it had already been named by Linnaeus (1766: 186) as *Certhia gutturalis*, albeit with an erroneous type locality ‘Brasilia’ (an error copied from the otherwise very thorough description by Brisson 1760: 658–659, pl. 33, fig. 3). Today *gutturalis* Linnaeus is accepted as a valid subspecies of *Chalcomitra senegalensis* (Gadow 1884: 91, Rookmaaker 1989: 207, 327; R. J. Dowsett *in litt.* 13 January 2008).

Cinnyris proteus Rüppell, 1840 vs. *Nectarinia cruentata* Rüppell, 1845

Five years later, Rüppell (1845: 26–27, pl. 9) redescribed *proteus* based largely on the same type material as in 1840, but under the different name *cruentata* Rüppell, 1845. Rüppell’s second description contains passages already given in 1840, clearly indicating that it indeed applies to the same taxon, but it nevertheless excludes reference to Levaillant (1813) and his figure. Bonaparte (1850) was the first to recognise this, but he synonymized

Cinnyris proteus with *Nectarinia cruentata*, contrary to the law of priority. To my knowledge, nobody since then has ever used the senior name *proteus* Rüppell, 1840, for the form commonly known today as *Nectarinia cruentata* Rüppell, 1845 (cf. Cheke & Mann 2001, Dickinson 2003, Steinheimer 2006). In these circumstances, it seemed preferable to establish *Nectarinia cruentata* as a *nomen protectum*. Nevertheless, although the terms of Art. 23.9.1.1 (ICZN 1999) may be met, those of Art. 23.9.1.2 are not: *cruentata* Rüppell has not been used more than 25 times in the last 50 years. Accordingly, I submitted an application to the ICZN to give the name *Nectarinia cruentata* Rüppell, 1845, precedence over *Cinnyris proteus* Rüppell, 1840, based on prevailing usage (Steinheimer 2006). This application was rejected in the second round of voting (first 15 to 13 affirmative, second 6 to 17 negative: ICZN 2007). Thus the valid name for this form, with the proviso explained below, becomes *Chalcomitra senegalensis proteus* (Rüppell, 1840). The word ‘*proteus*’ is a noun in apposition, thus invariable, deriving from the Greek mythological being ‘Proteos’ and the Latin ‘Proteus’—a sea god, fabled to assume various shapes (N. David *in litt.* 12 January 2008; see also Art. 26, ICZN 1999). Originally, Levaillant (1813: 165) applied this name in the French spelling ‘Protée’ because of the various shades of colours and different plumages this species can possess. The proviso is contingent on lectotypification of a specimen of Rüppell’s own material of *proteus*, which would automatically exclude Levaillant’s (1813) fig. 2 on pl. 295 and text (pp. 165–167), which, as explained above, applies instead to *Chalcomitra senegalensis gutturalis* (Linnaeus, 1766) from ‘Caffrerie’ (i.e. Tembu- and Pondoland, Eastern Cape, South Africa), later corrected to probably Maputo, southern Mozambique (Clancey 1994).

Lectotype designation of *Cinnyris proteus* Rüppell, 1840

Accordingly, I here designate the following specimen in the Forschungsinstitut und Naturmuseum Senckenberg, Frankfurt am Main (SMF) from Rüppell’s own material, from Simen, Ethiopia, as the lectotype of *Cinnyris proteus* Rüppell, 1840: 91, footnote:

Lectotype: SMF 12664 (Steinbacher 1949: 116, Hartert 1891: 30, no. 442, first specimen). Adult male. Loc.: Valley of Province Simen (6,500 franz. [ft.]), Ethiopia. Collected by Rüppell in July–August 1832 [data on first SMF collection label: »*Nectarinia cruentata* et *proteus* Rüppell, ?, Simen i. Abyssinien, Geschenk von Dr Rüppell 1832, [Rüppell No.] 597«].

Known paralectotypes: BMNH 1837.6.10.712 [(Gadow 1884: 94, sp. b). Female. Loc.: (Province Simen), Ethiopia, Rüppell (in 1832), (number not given), (exchange SMF 1834)]; SMF 72477 [Immature/eclipse male. Loc.: (Province Simen), Ethiopia, Rüppell (in 1832), (number not given)]; SMF 72478 [Female. Loc.: (Province Simen), Ethiopia, Rüppell (in 1832), (number not given)]; SMF 72479 [Female. Loc.: (Province Simen), Ethiopia, Rüppell (in 1832), (number) 397c]; SMF 72480 [Immature/eclipse male. Loc.: (Province Simen), Ethiopia, Rüppell (in 1832), (number not given)]; a sixth paralectotype from Rüppell’s collection, BMNH 1837.6.10.711 [(Vell. Cat. XXVI: 26e, Gadow 1884: 94 sp. a)] could not be traced in 2002 (Steinheimer 2005b). Possible paralectotype: RMNH 133141 [Temminck Cat. No. 1, Adult male. Loc.: Abyssinia, (no collector given = probably Rüppell via SMF and Temminck)] (Dekker & Quaiser 2006: 68). Any specimen used for Levaillant’s (1813: pp. 165–167, pl. 295, fig. 2) description of ‘Sucrier-Protée’ (none has been traced at the museums of Leiden and Paris; H. van Grouw, E. Pasquet & C. Quaiser *in litt.* March 2008) also automatically becomes a paralectotype of *Cinnyris proteus* Rüppell, 1840.

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